

Borough District of Drogheda – March 2016

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough District of Drogheda held in Barlow House, West Street, Drogheda, on Monday, 7th March, 2016 at 6.00 p.m.

In attendance:

Mayor: Cllr. P. Bell

Members: Cllrs: T. Byrne, K. Callan, A. Cassidy, R. Culhane, K. Flood, F. Godfrey, P. Smith, O. Tully

Officials: Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services
Gerry Kelly, Senior Engineer
Pat Finn, Senior Engineer
Emer O’Callaghan, Senior Executive Planner
Brona O’Reilly, Administrative Officer
Fiona Downes, Meetings Administrator

Apologies:

Minute No. 29/16

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st February, 2016, were confirmed on the proposal of Cllr. F. Godfrey and seconded by Cllr. K. Callan.

Minute No. 30/16

Matters arising

- Minute No. 18/16 – P. Finn, Senior Engineer advised that Meath County Council hadn’t been approached to date and that there was no provision in this year’s budget for works required on Obelisk Bridge.

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- Minute No. 21/16 – B. O'Reilly, Administrative Officer advised that persons on Meath County Council or Dublin City Council's housing list are not able to go onto Louth County Council's housing list.
P. Finn, Senior Engineer advised that he would confirm if Beaulieu View has been taken in charge.

Minute No. 31/16

Part 8 Planning Report in respect of Drogheda Civic Offices refurbishment and extension works

Proposed by Cllr. P. Bell

Seconded by Cllr. O. Tully

Members welcomed the report which had been circulated to members with printed copies distributed at the meeting. E. O'Callaghan, Senior Executive Planner gave an overview of the plans for the council offices in Fair Street and addressed questions re same.

The members expressed their delight regarding the proposals and the fact that a wonderful historic building would be preserved for future generations in the heart of Drogheda with an exhibition space that would be a public space.

Minute No. 32/16

Housing and Communities Progress Report

During discussion on the Report issued with the Agenda the following matters were raised:

- Had the tender been advertised for Boice Court and when it is due to commence. B. O'Reilly, Administrative Officer, advised that the tender hadn't been published yet as they were waiting on the Department to revert back to them regarding commencing phase 2 and 3 together.
- Residents had expressed concerns regarding the design of the houses at Scarlet Street. North East Housing Association to be contacted re same.
- It was confirmed that the council is buying houses in the Drogheda area for social housing.
- The figure for homelessness will be checked to confirm whether it included the figures for February.

- Query in relation to inclusion of the number of transfer requests on the housing report. How long is the wait on the transfer list and how many have been transferred? B.O'Reilly, Administrative Officer, advised that it was dependent on the availability and suitability of houses and that they also have to consider the housing list. There are 155 on the transfer list at present. P. Donnelly, Director of Services advised that the figures are collated centrally and that an additional burden may be placed on staff on trying to sub divide reports but that it would be reviewed to see if it can be done.
- Current status of Tenant Purchase Scheme – waiting on Circular from Department.
- Request to include details of the land bank around Drogheda on future housing progress reports.
- Query re the number of houses to be constructed under phase 3 in Boice Court.

Minute No. 33/16

Operations, Marine and Infrastructure Report

During discussion on the Report issued with the Agenda the following matters were raised:

- The issue of drainage in housing estates such as Pearse Park and Crushrod Avenue and footpath maintenance including Sandyford Terrace and who is responsible for drainage in housing estates. G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that the council is responsible for areas taken in charge and he would bring these areas to the attention of the area engineer.
- Thanks were given to the Council for the prompt response to getting four wheelchair access points in the Yellowbatter area. Query in relation to availability of funding for similar works. G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that there was no specific budget but that work is continuously ongoing and that it would be carried under the maintenance budget.
- Thanks were given for the resolution of drainage issues in the Termon Abbey area and that the council promptly resolved the issue re water leakage in Termonfeckin.
- Query in relation to change of use of materials for potholes and that the majority are worse than they have been before and the length of time before any works are carried out. G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that our infrastructure is deteriorating over last number of years due to very wet weather conditions. There has been no change in materials used but it is very difficult to fix potholes in wet weather. Decisions on repairs are a balancing act with the scarce resources available.
- Steel plates placed on the road at Riverbank and also Broadmeadows and the noise they cause, especially at night. G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that he would report same to area engineer.

- The condition of road at Tom Roes Point, manhole covers at the old cement factory and Port Access. Query re necessity of waiting on CFRAM Report to be finalised. Can interim works be carried out where they are essential? G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that they were going out to tender for mechanical surveys on roads and Tom Roes Point would be included in same. The council can examine certain measures, working with the OPW, subject to funding being available on an interim basis.
- Request to get an update on proposed works on North Quay from Irish Water and whether North Link have been contacted re getting some grace on tolls for duration of works. P. Donnelly, Director of Services advised that once the Senior Engineer is satisfied with the information from Irish Water they will bring it to the meeting. North Link hasn't been contacted as there isn't a definitive start and end date for works.

The Road Works Programme 2016 was presented by G. Kelly, Senior Engineer

Proposed by Cllr. K. Callan

Seconded by Cllr. O. Tully

And resolved

That the programme as circulated was agreed.

Minute No. 34/16

Votes of Sympathy

Votes of sympathy were extended to the family and friends of the following:

Mr. Frank Gallagher former member of Drogheda Borough Council

Mr. Tommy Reilly former member and Cathaoirleach of Louth County Council

Robert (Jomi) Williams

Mr. Pat Burke

Sr. Marie Coyle

Ms. Sadie Garry

Mr. Patrick (Patsy) McCole

Mr Justice Adrian Hardiman

Members lead by the Mayor observed a minute's silence in respect of those listed.

Minute No. 35/16

Notices of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. P. Smith

Seconded by Cllr. P. Bell

"Calling on this Borough District to construct 'yellow box junctions' on the Ballymakenny Road at the entrance to Castlemanor and Matson Lodge housing estates in order to allow residents of both estates to access the Ballymakenny Road at peak school times"

REPLY:

There is a short period in the mornings and evenings when school traffic associated with Ballymakenny Road primary schools is active. Considering that motorists on Ballymakenny Road give way to motorists exiting estates during periods of peak traffic and considering the level of traffic and the resulting delays, I do not consider the costs to introduce yellow boxes is warranted at this time.

Members raised concerns re the reply as they feel that the costs are not prohibitive and that it is a reasonable and measured request. G. Kelly, Senior Engineer advised that the engineer who reviewed this doesn't believe that a yellowbox is warranted as it won't help with speeding but Mr. Kelly said that it will be reviewed again.

Minute No. 36/16

Notices of Motion

Proposed by Cllr. K. Callan

Seconded by Cllr. P. Smith

"Calling on this Council to clarify the area of its budget where €2million has been allocated to match fund EU Funding for the improvement of town centre areas of Dundalk. Calling on the Council to explain why no such similar funding or any funding at all was ringfenced to carry out similar works in the town centre area of Drogheda where parts of the town and its historic structures require urgent attention."

REPLY:

It is intended that the match funding for the Dundalk grant will be provided through the Capital Budget. The amount provided in the current Capital Programme is insufficient as the grant allocation had not been announced at the time and a revised Capital Programme will come to Council for approval shortly. Drogheda was not eligible for funding under the particular Scheme which

was confined to Gateways and Hubs as designated by the National Spatial Strategy.

The Chief Executive and Management Team are meeting with RIAI representatives in the next few weeks to receive their final report on the Colloquium held in Drogheda last year. Following this it is intended that proposals for Drogheda, in particular the general Narrow West Street area, will be developed with a Project Team to be established for that purpose. A report setting out the proposed process, etc. will issue to the Borough District in April.

Members were anxious that Drogheda is missing out on funding and that Drogheda businesses are paying rates but are suffering on a daily basis due to deficit in the infrastructure in the town. Concerns were raised that a press statement was issued advising that the council was aware of funding coming down the line for Dundalk but that the amount provided in the budget was not sufficient and the fact that no funding was allocated for Drogheda. P. Donnelly, Director of Services clarified that Louth is now a single local authority providing for the whole county. When an opportunity presents itself to avail of funding the council pursues same with gusto and as a result of this Louth was successful in getting €2m funding for Dundalk as a result of it's Gateway status under the National Spatial Strategy. The Management Team and the Chief Executive continue to support RIAI and continually pursue whatever funding opportunities are available.

Minute No. 37/16

Proposed by Cllr. R. Culhane

Seconded by Cllr. P. Smith

"Calling on Louth Co Council to explore the provision of removable flood defence barriers on the wall of the North Quay in Drogheda. The provision of which would save the many businesses located in the area from financial loss suffered from closure and clean up following flooding at times of high tide and exceptional weather conditions. The provision of flood defences would also prevent serious traffic disruption that impacts on the town as a whole."

REPLY:

The Council will explore the feasibility of deploying temporary barriers during flood events. However it should be noted that from past experience that measures to prevent water backing up through the drainage system is also required to combat tidal flooding at this location.

Members discussed the possibility of using non return valves to help alleviate spot flooding coming up the drains and removing the caps on the wall to build the wall higher or using demountable flood defences. P. Finn, Senior Engineer advised that they are in contact with OPW and will see what comes from these discussions and there may be a possibility of implementing some of the recommendations ahead of CFRAM report and

also the issue of a permanent wall may not be compatible with the river being a focal point of Drogheda.

Notices of Question

The following Notices of question were noted by the members:

Minute No. 38/16

Cllr. P. Smith

" Can this Borough District provide an update on the taking in charge of the Stables Housing Estate in Termonfeckin"

REPLY:

Works in this development are now completed, Irish Water are now going to assess the development and we await their report on the matter prior to commencing the statutory process of taking in charge.

Minute No. 39/16

Cllr. K. Callan

"Will this Council meet with residents of the Meadowview Estate to discuss issues around sewerage blocks in the estates network."

REPLY:

Water services section of Louth County Council will meet representatives of the residents Meadowview estate, Drogheda. The pipe maintenance responsibility is illustrated on the document received from Irish water and should assist in regard to whether a blockage is a private matter or the responsibility of Irish water.'

There being no other business, the meeting concluded.

The Minutes were confirmed at a meeting of the Council held on:

Date: _____

Mayor: _____

Meeting Administrator: _____